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Scotch and Irish Blairs.

Biographical Sketches.



A Reprint.

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THE SCOTCH BLAIRS.

BLAIR, a surname of great antiquity in Scotland, and like so many others in that kingdom, is territorial. The word *Blair* or *Blar* properly signifies a plain clear of woods, but the Celtæ in general choosing such plains for their hostile encounters, the word came at length to signify a field of battle. The family of Blair of Blair in Ayrshire, have maintained since the thirteenth century a high position in that county, and a branch of it acquired the lands of Dunskey, in Wigtonshire, by purchase in the year 1658. The Blairs of Blair and the Blairs of Balthyock in Perthshire long disputed the honour of chiefship. James the Sixth, to whom the point was referred, decided that 'the oldest man for the time being, of either family, should have the precedency.' Both families have had several considerable landed families descended from them. Those from Balthyock are settled in Perthshire, Forfarshire, and the north; those from Blair of that ilk in the counties of Ayr, Wigton, Renfrew, &c., in the south and west. Their arms bear no affinity, but as it will afterwards appear, it does not follow that they may not have descended from the same stock.

Of the family of Blair of Blair, the first on record was William de Blair, who, in 1205, during the reign of William the Lion, is mentioned in a contract of agreement, in the charter chest of the burgh of Irvine, betwixt Ralph de Eglington and the village of Irvine. It is well known that many Normans and English came into Scotland during this and the previous reigns, who received grants of lands from the crown. The circumstance of his son being a witness to a royal charter (which only tenants-in-chief of the crown, nobles, and ecclesiastics, were privileged to do), proves that the lands he held were a royal fief, and his Norman surname of William, which was also that of his son, never having been borne by natives in Scotland until after Prince Henry, eldest son of David I. had bestowed it upon his second son, (the then reigning monarch), along with the Norman prefix *de*,

lends probability to the conjecture that William was an Anglo-Norman warrior, on whom had been bestowed these lands of Blair. He died in the reign of Alexander II., and left a son, William de Blair. A William de Blair is witness in a charter of King Alexander III. to the abbacy of Dunfermline, about the year 1260, but it is uncertain if this is the same. William de Blair is said to have had two sons, Sir Bryce, his heir, and David.

Sir Bryce, the elder son, was treacherously slain by the English, with other Ayrshire barons, at Ayr in 1296. He left no issue, and was succeeded by his brother, David Blair or Blare, who was compelled to swear fealty to King Edward I. of England, in 1296, the year of his brother's death. In the critical remarks on the Ragman Roll (Prynne's copy) he is mentioned as one of the progenitors of the family. David's son, Roger de Blair of that ilk, was a firm friend of King Robert the Bruce, from whom he obtained a charter under the great seal, 'Rogero de Blair, dilecto et fideli nostro,' of four chalders of victual yearly out of the lands of Bourtrees, in the barony of Cunningham, Ayrshire, to him and his heirs forever. Roger died in the reign of David II.

His son, Hugh de Blair, is said to have succeeded him. A *Hugone del Blare, et Johne fratre suo*, are mentioned in a charter of confirmation during the reign of David II., to the monastery of Kilwinning, as witnesses.

Hugh was succeeded by his son, James Blair of that ilk, an adherent of King David Bruce, from whom he got a grant of several tenements of land about the town of Ayr, which had fallen into the king's hand by forfeiture. This is confirmed by a charter under the great seal from the said King David, dated at Edinburgh, 3d February, 1368, in the 39th year of his reign. Robertson, in his 'Ayrshire Families,' states that he had two sons, James, who succeeded him, and Sir John, progenitor of the Blairs of Adamton, Ayrshire. The lands of Adamton appear, from a charter of David II., to have been acquired in or before 1363, by their father in excambion with Sir Robert de Erskine, for the lands of Malerbe and others in Perthshire. The Blairs of Adamton flourished for a long series of years until Catherine, only daughter and heiress of David Blair of Adamton, married, in 1776, Sir William Maxwell, baronet, of Monreith. She sold Adamton to Robert Reid, Esq., and died in 1798.

The next laird, James Blair of that ilk, son of the former, obtained a charter from Robert II., dated 8th May 1375, confirming a charter, granted to his father by David II., of the lands of Corshogyll, &c., in Dumfries-shire, and another,

of 23d July, the same year, of the lands of Hartwood, &c. He died in the reign of James the First, leaving a son, called David by Douglas in his Baronage (p. 194), but his name was more probably Hugh, as Sir Hugh Blair, of that ilk, appears as witness to several charters of the period in which he lived, the commencement of the fifteenth century.

It is supposed that he was succeeded by a son of the name of James, and he by his nephew (Sir Hugh's grandson), John Blair, of that ilk, who was served heir to his grandfather, and obtained from James the Third a charter, 'Johanni Blair, de eodem, nepoti et hæredi Jacobi, &c., terrarum baroniæ de Blair, 19 January, 1477.' He left, with two daughters, Egidia, married to James Kennedy, of the family of Cassillis, and Elizabeth, married to Ninian Stewart, of Bute, a son, John Blair, of that ilk, who married Lady Elizabeth Montgomery, fifth daughter of Hugh, first earl of Eglington, and had issue, John, his heir, and Margaret, married to John Crawford of Crawfordland. In Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, there is an entry under date May 18, 1545, the fourth year of Queen Mary, that John Blair and Patrick, his son, both then at the horn, found security to underly the law for abiding from the queen's armies at Ancrum, on the previous February 27, and Coldingham on December 31, and from other raids.

John Blair, of that ilk, his son, died in the early part of the reign of James the Sixth, and was succeeded by his son, John Blair of Blair. In the work just quoted, under date May 21, 1577, John Blair, of that ilk, William Blair, his brother, Robert Blair, brother of William Blair of Halie, with twenty-five others, their servants and followers, are indicted for shooting with pistolets, following and chasing one Thomas Crawford and his servants, for their slaughter, upon forethought felony. The laird of Blair, and his brother, William, being found guilty, they respectively found security to enter their persons in ward within the castle of Blackness by eight o'clock in the evening, and not to escape therefrom until they were relieved, John Blair under the penalty of five thousand pounds, and William Blair under that of two thousand pounds. By his wife, Grizel, daughter of Robert, third Lord Sempill, this John Blair of Blair had, with three daughters, five sons, viz., John, who married Isobel, daughter of Thomas, fifth Lord Boyd, and who predeceased his father, leaving three daughters all well married; Bryce, who succeeded to the estate on the death of his father in 1609; Alexander, who married Elizabeth, only daughter and heir of William Cochrane, of that ilk, when he took his name and

arms, and thus became ancestor of the noble family of Dundonald, his grandson, Sir William Cochrane, knight, being created earl of Dundonald in 1669, [See DUNDONALD, earl of]; ¹James; and ²Robert, of Bogtown, father of Sir Adam Blair, of Bogtown.

Bryce Blair of Blair, the second son, married Annabell Wallace, and had two sons and five daughters, the latter of whom were all well married. He died 4th February, 1639, and was succeeded by his elder twin-son, Sir Bryce Blair, who was knighted by Charles the First. He married, in 1618, Marian, daughter of Walter Dundas, of Dundas, and died a few months after his father. He was succeeded by his son, John Blair, who died soon after without issue, and was succeeded by his uncle, John Blair, who married Lady Jean Cunningham, daughter of William, eighth earl of Glencairn, and dying in 1662, was succeeded by his son, William Blair, of Blair. This gentleman was named by the restoration government of Scotland a member of the Commission in Ayrshire for holding courts on the Covenanters, but he early joined the Revolution party, and was a member of the Convention of estates, 16th March, 1689, and one of the committee for settling the government. Having raised a troop of horse in support of King William, he marched with it into Perthshire. Information of this having reached the Viscount Dundee, then in arms in Athol for King James, he determined to surprise them, and accordingly he left Athol, and proceeded with celerity during the night towards Perth, which city he entered unawares early next morning, and seized both the laird of Blair and the laird of Pollock, who was with him, and two other officers, in their beds, and carried them off prisoners to the Highlands, where the laird of Blair died very soon after. He had married Lady Margaret Hamilton, fourth daughter of William, second duke of Hamilton, and was succeeded by his son, William Blair, of Blair, who was a commissioner of supply for the county of Ayr, in the Convention parliament which met in 1689. He married Magdalene, daughter of James Campbell, of Cargunnoch, by whom, besides a daughter, Magdalene, he had a son, John, to whom he disposed his estate, reserving to himself a life-rent. His son predeceased him, unmarried, and was succeeded by his sister, Magdalene Blair, who married William Scott, Esq., advocate, second son of John Scott, Esq., of Malleny, in Mid Lothian, (an ancient branch of Buccleuch,) and had a son, William, her heir. The heiress of Blair is supposed to have died before the year 1715, and Mr. Scott, her widower, who had assumed the name and arms of Blair,

the latter quartered with those of Scott, married, secondly, Catherine, only daughter of Alexander Tait, of Edinburgh, merchant, and had by her five sons and six daughters. Hamilton, the eldest, succeeded his half-brother, William, on the death of the latter, unmarried, in 1732. He had early entered the army, and in 1760 was major of the Scots Greys. He married Jane, daughter of Sydenham Williams, Esq., of Herringston, Dorsetshire, and had a son and two daughters. William Blair, of Blair, his son, succeeded him in 1782. The latter married Magdalene, daughter of John Fordyce, Esq., of Ayton, Berwickshire, for many years commissioner of the woods and forests and land revenue, and had five sons and seven daughters. His eldest sons having predeceased him, he was succeeded, in 1841, by his third son, William Fordyce Blair, Captain R. N. The latter married, July 23, 1840, Caroline Isabella, youngest daughter of John Sprot, Esq., London; issue, two daughters, Mary and Caroline Madalina, and two sons, William Augustus, born June 24, 1848; and Frederick Gordon, born Nov. 11, 1852. Mrs. Blair died Oct. 24, 1857.

The ancestor of the Blairs of Balthyock, Perthshire, was Alexander de Blair, who flourished in the reigns of William the Lion and his son, Alexander the Second. He married Ela, daughter of Hugh de Nyden, of that ilk, in Fifeshire, and got a charter of the lands of 'Konakin in Fifeshire, holding of the bishop of St. Andrews, to which Malcolm, seventh earl of Fife, and Duncan and David, his brothers, are witnesses.' This charter bears no date, but Malcolm, seventh earl of Fife, succeeded his father in 1203, and died in 1229. A comparison of dates makes it not impossible that this Alexander de Blair may have been a son of William de Blair, of Blair, in which case he appears to have called his son after the name of his grandfather, William. By his wife, Ela, he got also a part of the lands of Nyden or Nydie, which remained a long time in the possession of the Blairs. The arms borne by this family may have been those of de Nyden, as at that period they generally followed the lands, irrespective of the name of the possessor. As this fact has not been hitherto recognized by genealogical writers, and a contrary opinion as to the connection of the two families from the one now indicated has, in consequence, been held, we annex an instance in illustration taken from that interest-

ing relic of chivalry, 'The Siege of Karlaverock,' premising that what is there said of banners must needs hold true of family bearings in general, inasmuch as the banners formed their chief features in such bearings. 'Ralph de Monthermer, a private baron, became earl of Gloucester by marriage with Joan, daughter of Edward I., and widow of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, *by which title* he was frequently summoned to parliament. On the occasion of the siege of Caerlaverock, A. D. 1300, he led his followers, not under his own banner, but under that of Clare, the earl of Gloucester, whilst he was himself vested in a surcoat of his paternal arms, which he also bore in his shield. On his decease, his successor in the earldom (a son of his wife by her first husband) assumed the arms and dignities of the estate of Clare, and Monthermer was summoned in the very next parliament as a private baron only. This practice probably continued—and in the case of heiresses particularly—until quarterings by marriage were introduced.' Alexander de Blair's son, Sir William de Blair, was steward of Fife under Alexander the Second, who conferred on him the honour of knighthood. This is instructed from the chartulary of Dunfermline, where 'dominus Willielmus de Blair, senschallus de Fife,' is particularly mentioned in 1235. He was also a witness in a charter of Malcolm, eighth earl of Fife, together with Andrew, bishop of Moray, who died in 1242. He appears to have died in the beginning of the reign of King Alexander the Second. He had two sons, Sir Alexander, his heir, and Walter, who is mentioned in a charter of Friskin de Moravia in 1260.

Sir Alexander Blair, the elder son, is designed 'dominus Alexander de Blair, miles,' in a charter of Malcolm, eighth earl of Fife, 'de ecclesia de Innerawn,' &c., in or before the year 1266, in which year earl Malcolm died. By his wife, Helen, sister of Sir William Ramsay, Sir Alexander had a son, John Blair, who succeeded him. The son of the latter, David de Blair, is said by Douglas in his *Baronage* (p. 187), in his father's lifetime, and when but a young man, to have been, with many of his countrymen, compelled to swear fealty to King Edward the First, of England, when he had overrun Scotland in 1296.

David de Blair, of the Balthyock family, died in the reign of David the Second. He left two sons, Patrick, the first, who was designed of Balthyock, and Thomas, progenitor of the Blairs of Ardblair.

Patrick de Blair, besides the estate of Balthyock, in Perthshire, of which he obtained a charter from Nicholas de Erskine, lord of Kinnoul, the superior, dated 22d October,

1370, appears from charters quoted by Douglas, to have possessed also the lands of Quilt, in Fife, and Balgilloch or Balgillo, in Forfarshire. He married the daughter and coheiress of John Ardler, of that ilk, and died soon after 1393.

His son, Thomas Blair, second baron of Balthyock, received a charter under the great seal, from King Robert the Third, of the lands of Ardblair, Baldowie, and Balgillo, in Forfarshire, dated in the tenth year of his reign, which is 1399.

His grandson, Thomas Blair, of Balthyock, was one of the gentlemen upon several inquests in settling the marches of the lands of the abbacy of Arbroath with their neighbours in 1483 and 1484. He died in the beginning of the reign of James the Fourth. He had two sons, Alexander, his heir, and John, of Balmyle and Potento. Alexander married Jean, daughter of Andrew, third lord Gray, and had a son, Thomas, who succeeded him in 1509.

In Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, under date March 10, 1540, there is a remission to 'Thomas Blair, of Bathyok,' for treasonably abiding from the army at Solway. From numerous cases in the same work it appears that about this period the various families of the Blairs of Balthyock and Ardblair, the Charteris of Kinfauns and Cuthilgurdy, the Drummonds, and other barons and lairds in Perthshire, were constantly involved in feuds with each other, and occasionally with burgesses and citizens of Perth, and others. On 7th March, 1549, 'Thomas Blare, of Balthyock,' Thomas his son, and others, found security to underly the law for the slaughter of Sir Henry Dempster, chaplain, and six others. John Blair, of Ardblair, Andrew Blair and Thomas Blair, his sons, Peter Blair, Alexander Blair, half brother to John Butter, of Gormok, who was also implicated, David Blair, of Knockmaheir, with John and Patrick Blair, his sons, and various others, were, on the 3d June, 1554, summoned for being art and part in the slaughter of George Drummond, of Leidcrieff, and William, his son. Various of the accused made satisfaction and obtained pardon, but Patrick Blair, in Ardblair, and Robert Smyth, in Drumlochy, were beheaded on 12th December thereafter. Under date May 2, 1562, Thomas Blair, of Balthyock, Alexander, William and Patrick Blair, his sons; Thomas, his grandson, and Alexander Blair, tutor of Balmyle; with forty-six others, found sureties to appear for the 'crewell slauchter of umquill Alexander Raa, burges of Perth, and diverse utheris crymes contenit in the Letteris;' while on the same day John Charteris, of Kinfauns, David, his brother, and thirty-nine others, found surety for the con-

vocation of various persons to the number of twenty-four, and coming upon Thomas Blair, laird of Balthyock, and his accomplices, and giving of them injurious words.

Thomas Blair, of Balthyock, above mentioned, had two sons and three daughters. His eldest son, Alexander Blair, of Balthyock, is described as a man of parts and integrity, and highly esteemed by King James the Sixth, who, with his own hand, wrote a friendly letter to him, 13th September, 1579, concerning his teinds and other affairs in his part of the country, wherein he expressed himself in the kindest manner, saying that he confided chiefly in him for the management of all his concerns in that neighbourhood. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Laurence Mercer, of Aldie, by whom he had three sons and one daughter, the latter married to George, son and heir apparent of John Charteris, of Kinfauns.

Laurence, his eldest son, died before his father, leaving a son, Alexander Blair, younger of Balthyock, one of the witnesses in the Gowrie conspiracy; his deposition is given in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 188.

Thomas, the second son, married a lady of rank in France, and settled in that country. His posterity retained the name of Blair, and became allied with some of the most considerable families in France, as De Gevres, de la Rochefoucauld, de Nouailles, de Agremont, de Champignelle, de Brimont, des Gilbert, des Jolly, de Fleury, &c. The third son, Patrick Blair, was progenitor of the Blairs of Pittendreich, Glasclune, &c.

Sir Thomas Blair, of Balthyock, the grandson of Laurence Blair, and son of the above-named Alexander Blair, by his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Haliburton, of Pitcur, had the honour of knighthood conferred on him by King Charles the First. He married first, Margaret, daughter of Sir John Ayton, of Ayton, in the county of Fife, by whom he had three sons and five daughters; secondly, Margaret, daughter of Sir Alexander Gibson, of Durie, relict of Sir Thomas Fotheringham, of Powrie, by whom he had no issue. He died about 1652, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Sir Alexander Blair. Andrew, the second son, obtained from his father the lands and estate of Inchyra, in Perthshire, which became the title of his family. John, the third son, was designed of Balmyle. Sir Alexander married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Fotheringham, of Powrie, heir of line of that family, and by her he had three sons and two daughters. He died in 1692.

His eldest son, Thomas Blair, died without issue, and

was succeeded by his brother, John Blair, who married Margaret, daughter of Patrick Butter, of Gormack, by whom he had only one daughter, Margaret, his sole heiress, who succeeded to the estate of Balthyock, and in 1723 married David, son of Mr. David Drummond, advocate, who in consequence assumed the name and arms of Blair of Balthyock. He died in 1728, and his son, John Blair, succeeded to the estate. The latter married Patricia, daughter of John Stevens, Esq., of Edinburgh, and had a son, David, and five daughters.

The eldest daughter, Margaret Blair, married Major Johnston, and had an only daughter and heir, Jemima Johnston, who became representative of the family of Blair of Balthyock. She married, 26th November, 1811, Adam Fergusson, Esq., and had issue, Neil James Fergusson, of Balthyock, and six other sons.

BLAIR, JOHN, the chaplain of Sir William Wallace, was born in Fifeshire in the reign of Alexander the Third, and was educated in the same school with Wallace at Dundee. He afterwards studied for some time in the university of Paris, and became a monk of the order of St. Benedict. On his return to Scotland he was appointed chaplain to Wallace, then governor of the kingdom, whom he accompanied in almost all his battles, and after his cruel death wrote his life and exploits in Latin verse, a chronicle from which Blind Harry derived most of his materials for his heroic poem on Wallace. Of this work, which might have been of great value in illustrating the history of that troubled period, an inaccurate fragment only is left, which was copied by Sir James Balfour out of the Cottonian library, and published in 1705, with a commentary by Sir Robert Sibbald. Hume, in his 'History of the Douglasses,' introduced a translation of it. Blair, who, on becoming a Benedictine, adopted the name of Arnold, belonged to the monastery of that order in Dunfermline. The exact period of his death is unknown. He was the author of another work, entitled 'De Liberata Tyrannide Scotia,' which is no longer to be found.—*Mac-kenzie's Scots Writers*.

BLAIR, ROBERT, an eminent minister of the Church of Scotland, in the days of the Covenant, was born at Irvine, Ayrshire, in 1593. He was the sixth and youngest son of John Blair, of Windyedge, in that county, a branch of the family of Blair of Blair, and of Beatrix Muir, of the family of Rowallan. He studied at the university of Glasgow, and was for a short time employed as assistant to a teacher in that city. In his twenty-second year he was appointed a regent or professor in the college. In 1616 he was licensed as a preacher of the gospel. Having, in 1622, resigned his charge, in consequence of the appointment of Dr. Cameron, who favoured episcopacy, as principal of the university, he went over to Ireland, and was for some years minister of a Presbyterian congregation at Bangor. The bishop of Down having expelled him from his charge, he, with various other clergymen, fitted out a ship, and set sail with the intention of emigrating to New England. Being driven back by a storm, Blair preferred returning to Scotland, where he arrived at a very critical period. He preached for some time at Ayr, and was afterwards settled by the General Assembly at St. Andrews. In 1640 he accompanied the Scottish army into England, and assisted at the negotiations for the peace of Rippon. After the Irish Rebellion of 1641, Blair again went over to Ireland, with several other clergymen, the Presbyterians of that country having solicited a supply of ministers from the General Assembly. He did not long remain there, however, having returned to St. Andrews, where he proved himself to be a useful and zealous preacher. In 1645 he was one of the Scottish ministers who went to Newcastle to reason with the king, and, on the death of Henderson, he was appointed by his majesty his chaplain for Scotland. After the restoration he was subjected, like many other worthy men of God, to the persecutions of Archbishop Sharp, and for years had no regular place of worship, but preached and administered the sacraments wherever opportunity offered. He was prohibited from coming within twenty miles of St. Andrews, and during his latter years he found a refuge at Meikle Couston, in the parish of Aberdour, where

he died, August 27, 1666. He was buried in the churchyard of that parish, where a tablet was erected to his memory. He was the author of a Commentary on the Book of Proverbs, and of some political pieces, none of which have been preserved. His descendants, Robert Blair, author of 'The Grave,' Dr. Hugh Blair, the celebrated sermon writer, and the late Right Hon. Robert Blair, lord president of the court of session, added fresh lustre to the family name.—*Scots Worthies*.

BLAIR, ROBERT, the Rev., author of 'The Grave,' a poem, eldest son of the Rev. David Blair, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, chaplain to the king, and grandson of the eminent minister of St. Andrews of the same name, the subject of the preceding notice, was born at Edinburgh in 1699, and studied for the church at the university of his native city. After spending some time on the Continent, he was, on January 5, 1731, ordained minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian, where he continued till his death. He was an anxious and animated preacher and an accomplished scholar, and evinced a peculiar predilection for the natural sciences, particularly botany, in which he was allowed to excel. He carried on a correspondence with Mr. Henry Baker, F. R. S., author of several works on the microscope. From this, it should seem, that he employed part of his time in optical researches. His first poem (originally published in Dr. Anderson's collection) was one dedicated to the memory of Mr. William Law, of Elvingston, in East Lothian, professor of moral philosophy in the university of Edinburgh, whose daughter, Isabella, he afterwards married. She was the sister of Mr. Law, who succeeded to the estate of Elvingston, and was sheriff of Haddington for fifty years. Among the most respected of his friends was the lamented Colonel Gardiner, who was killed at the battle of Prestonpans in 1745; and who appears to have been the medium of his opening a correspondence with Dr. Watts and Dr. Doddridge on the subject of his 'Grave.' On the 25th February, 1741-2, he addressed a letter to Dr. Doddridge, the following extract from which contains some interesting information as to the

composition and publication of his celebrated poem : "About ten months ago," he says, "Lady Frances Gardiner did me the favour to transmit to me some manuscript hymns of yours, with which I was wonderfully delighted. I wish I could, on my part, contribute in any measure to your entertainment, as you have sometimes done to mine in a very high degree. And that I may show how willing I am to do so, I have desired Dr. Watts to transmit to you a manuscript poem of mine, entitled 'The Grave,' written, I hope, in a way not unbecoming my profession as a minister of the gospel, though the greatest part of it was composed several years before I was clothed with so sacred a character. I was urged by some friends here, to whom I showed it, to make it public ; nor did I decline it, provided I had the approbation of Dr. Watts, from whom I have received many civilities, and for whom I had ever entertained the highest regard. Yesterday I had a letter from the Doctor, signifying his approbation of the piece in a manner most obliging. A great deal less from him would have done me no small honour. But at the same time, he mentions to me that he had offered it to two booksellers of his acquaintance, who, he tells me, did not care to run the risk of publishing it. They can scarce think, considering how critical an age we live in, with respect to such kind of writing, that a person living three hundred miles from London could write so as to be acceptable to the fashionable and polite. Perhaps it may be so ; though at the same time I must say, in order to make it more generally liked, I was obliged sometimes to go cross to my own inclinations, well knowing that whatever poem is written upon a serious argument, must, upon that very account, be under peculiar disadvantages ; and, therefore, proper arts must be used to make such a piece go down with a licentious age, which cares for none of those things. I beg pardon for breaking in upon moments precious as yours, and hope you will be so kind as to give me your opinion of the poem." The 'Grave' was not published till after the author's death. The first edition of it was printed at Edinburgh, in 8vo, in 1747, It "is unquestionably," says Pinkerton, "the best

piece of blank verse we have, save those of Milton." Mr. Blair died of a fever February 4, 1746, in the 47th year of his age. He was succeeded at Athelstaneford by Mr. John Home, author of "Douglas." By his wife, who survived him for several years, Mr. Blair had five sons and one daughter. The late Robert Blair of Avontoun, lord president of the court of session, of whom a notice follows, was his fourth son. An edition of 'the Grave, and other poems, to which are prefixed some account of the author's life and observations on his writings, by Robert Anderson, M. D.,' was published at Edinburgh in 1826, 12mo.

BLAIR, HUGH, D. D., an eminent divine and sermon writer, a great grandson of Robert Blair, minister of St. Andrews, and a descendant of the Blairs of Blair, was born at Edinburgh, April 7, 1718. His father, John Blair, cousin to the author of 'The Grave,' was at one time a respectable merchant in that city, but afterwards, from impaired fortune, he held an office in the Excise. Hugh, the subject of this article, was educated for the church at the university of Edinburgh, which he entered in October, 1730, and spent eleven years in his studies. In his sixteenth year, while attending the logic class, an 'Essay on the Beautiful,' written by him in the usual course of academical exercises, attracted the particular notice of Professor Stevenson, who appointed it to be read in public at the conclusion of the session, a mark of distinction which determined the bent of his genius to polite literature. About this time, for the more accurate acquirement of knowledge, he commenced making regular abstracts of the most important books which he read, particularly in history; and, assisted by some of his fellow-students, he constructed a very comprehensive scheme of chronological tables, which, devised by him for his own private use, was afterwards improved, filled up, and given to the public by his learned relative, Dr. John Blair, prebendary of Westminster, (a notice of whom is given subsequently) in his valuable work, 'The Chronology and History of the World.' In 1739 Dr. Blair took his degree of M. A., and in October, 1741, was licensed to preach by the presbytery of Edinburgh.

Soon after the earl of Leven presented him to the parish of Collessie in Fifeshire, to which he was ordained September 23, 1742. In less than ten months thereafter he was elected second minister of the Canongate Church, Edinburgh, to which he was inducted July 14, 1743. Here he continued eleven years. Notwithstanding an inveterate *burr*, which somewhat impeded his pronunciation, he soon became the most popular preacher of his day, from the care and attention to style which he bestowed on his discourses. In 1745, on the breaking out of the rebellion, he preached a sermon, strongly inculcating the principles of loyalty to the reigning family, which was afterwards printed. In October, 1754, he was translated by the town council to Lady Yester's, one of the parish churches of Edinburgh. In June, 1757, he received the degree of D. D. from the university of St. Andrews. In June, 1758, he was promoted to the High Church of Edinburgh, at the request of the lords of session and other distinguished persons who officially sat in that church.

Hitherto Dr. Blair had published nothing but two occasional sermons, some translations in verse of passages of Scripture for the psalmody of the church, and contributed one or two papers, among which was a review of Dr. Hutcheson's System of Moral Philosophy, to the first Edinburgh Review, begun in 1755, two numbers only of which were published. In December 11, 1759, having obtained the sanction of the university, he commenced a course of lectures on literary composition in the college, which was so much approved of that the town council, the patrons of the university, agreed in the following summer to institute a rhetoric class, as a permanent part of their academical course; and April 7, 1762, the king was graciously pleased, on their recommendation, to erect and endow a professorship of rhetoric and *belles lettres* in the university of Edinburgh, and to appoint Dr. Blair regius professor thereof, with a salary of seventy pounds. In 1788, when increasing years obliged him to retire from the duties of his chair, he published the lectures he had delivered; and they were universally acknowledged to contain a most judicious and comprehensive

system of rules for the formation and improvement of style in composition.

His first publication of importance was, 'A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian,' defending their authenticity, which, published in 1763, was prodigiously overrated on its first appearance, being declared "one of the finest pieces of critical composition in the English language." Dr. Blair took great credit to himself for his exertions in rescuing Ossian's Poems from oblivion. In a letter to Burns, the poet, dated May 4, 1787, he says: "I was the first person who brought out to the notice of the world the Poems of Ossian, first, by the 'Fragments of Ancient Poetry' which I published, and afterwards by my setting on foot the undertaking for collecting and publishing 'the Works of Ossian;' and I have always considered this as a meritorious action of my life." We are informed by his biographer, that it was at his solicitation and that of Home, the author of Douglas, that Mr. M'Pherson was induced to publish the 'Fragments of Ancient Poetry,' and that their patronage was of essential service in procuring the subscription, which enabled him to make his tour through the Highlands to collect the traditional poetry which bears the name of Ossian's Poems.

The first volume of his famous sermons was published in the year 1777. "It was not till that year," says his colleague and biographer, Dr. Finlayson, "that he could be induced to favour the world with a volume of the sermons which had so long furnished instruction and delight to his own congregation. But this volume being well received, the public approbation encouraged him to proceed; three other volumes followed at different intervals; and all of them experienced a degree of success of which few publications can boast. They circulated rapidly and widely wherever the English tongue extends; and were soon translated into almost all the languages of Europe." Soon after its first publication, the first volume attracted the notice of George the Third and his consort; a portion of the sermons, it is said, having been first read to their majesties in the royal closet, by the eloquent earl of Mansfield; and the king was

so highly pleased that by a royal mandate to the exchequer in Scotland, dated July 25, 1780, he conferred a pension of two hundred pounds a year on the author, which continued till his death. Boswell, in his 'Life of Johnson,' states that Dr. Blair transmitted the manuscript of his first volume of Sermons to Mr. Strahan, the king's printer in London, who, after keeping it for some time, wrote a letter to him discouraging the publication. Mr. Strahan, however, had sent one of the sermons to Dr. Johnson for his opinion, and after his letter to Dr. Blair had been sent off, he received from Johnson, on Christmas eve, 1776, a note in which was the following paragraph: "I have read over Dr. Blair's first sermon with more than approbation: to say it is good is to say too little." After a conversation with Dr. Johnson concerning these sermons, Mr. Strahan candidly wrote again to Dr. Blair, enclosing Johnson's note, and agreeing to purchase the volume, for which he and Mr. Cadell gave one hundred pounds. The sale was so rapid and extensive, that the publishers made Dr. Blair a present of fifty pounds, and afterwards of the same sum; thus voluntarily doubling the stipulated price. For the second volume they gave him at once three hundred pounds; and we believe for the others he received six hundred pounds each. A fifth volume was prepared by him for the press, and published after his death, in 1801, with 'A Short Account of his Life,' by James Finlayson, D.D. A larger Life, by Dr. Hill, appeared in 1807. Dr. Blair died at Edinburgh, December 27, 1800. He was heard at times to say that "he was left the last of his contemporaries."

His celebrated sermons are little more than moral discourses, and they never could have attained their popularity, a popularity unprecedented in the history of theological literature, without that high polish of style so peculiar to the author. They are now comparatively neglected. Nor can we wonder at this. In his desire for elegant diction and correctness of language, he was too apt to lose sight of the illustration of scriptural doctrines; and in many instances the truths of revelation were made to give place to cold and

unsatisfying moral disquisitions. In church politics, Dr. Blair was attached to the moderate party, but he did not take a prominent part in ecclesiastical discussions. From natural diffidence he never could be prevailed upon to become moderator of the General Assembly. He was very fond of reading novels, and was scrupulously particular as to his dress and appearance. He was likewise rather vain, and not unsusceptible of flattery. One of the most effective sermons he ever delivered he composed and preached in 1799, when past his eightieth year, in behalf of the fund for the benefit of the sons of the clergy. He had married, in April 1748, his cousin Catherine, daughter of the Rev. James Ban-natine, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. Mrs. Blair died in 1795; by her he had a son, who died in infancy, and a daughter, who lived to her twenty-first year.

Dr. Blair's works are :

The Importance of Religious Knowledge to Mankind ; a Sermon on Isa. xi, 9. 1750, 8vo.

Dissertations concerning the Antiquity, &c., of the Poems of Ossian, the son of Fingal, to be found prefixed to the edition of Ossian's Poems of Fingal, printed 1762, 4to.

Sermons. Edin. 1777-1800, 5 vols. 8vo. To vol. v. is annexed, A Short Account of the Life and Character of the Author, by J. Finlayson, D.D. Numerous editions.

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. Lond. 1783, 2 vols, 4to. Numerous editions.

The Compassion and Beneficence of the Deity ; a Sermon preached for the benefit of the sons of the clergy of the established Church of Scotland. To which is added, An Account of the Objects and Constitution of the Society. Edin. 1799, 8vo.

Sermons on the Duties of the Young. Edin. 1800, 8vo. Translated into French, by Lenoir. Par. 1811, 12mo.

Sermons, with a Short Account of his Life and Character, by J. Finlayson. Lond. 1801, 8vo.

Advice to Youth, containing a Compendium of the Duties of Human Life, in Youth and Manhood. 1807.

BLAIR, ROBERT, of Avontoun, a distinguished lawyer and judge, fourth son of the author of "The Grave," and also a great-grandson of the minister of St. Andrews of the same name, was born at the manse of Athelstaneford in East Lo-

thian in 1741, and educated for the bar. After receiving his elementary education at the High school of Edinburg, he entered the university, where, among others, he commenced a friendship with Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, which lasted during their lives. He was admitted advocate in 1764; and his great talents soon acquired for him an extensive practice. He early became a leading counsel, and had generally for his opponent in important cases the Hon. Henry Erskine; he and Mr. Blair being at that time the two most eminent members of the Scottish bar. He was for several years one of the assessors of the city of Edinburgh, and an advocate-depute, and in 1789 he was appointed solicitor-general for Scotland. In 1801 he was unanimously elected dean of the faculty of advocates. In 1806, on the change of ministry, he was succeeded as solicitor-general by the late John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldin. On this occasion he received a polite apology from the new minister, stating the necessity he was under of promoting his own political friends. Far from being out of temper at the change, Mr. Blair showed his magnanimity by offering his successor the use of his gown until the latter should get one prepared for himself. In 1807, on the return of the Tories to power, he was again offered the solicitor-generalship, but he declined both this and the higher office of lord advocate. In 1808, on the resignation of Sir Islay Campbell, he was appointed lord president of the court of session; and his conduct as judge gave universal satisfaction. He did not long enjoy that high office. He died suddenly, May 20, 1811, aged 68, only a few days before his friend Lord Melville, who had come to Edinburgh to attend his funeral. On returning from his usual walk on the day of his death, when the door of his house in George's Square was opened, he fell into the arms of his servant, and expired in a few minutes. In an ably written character of President Blair which appeared in the Caledonian Mercury, May 23, it is said:—"Of the first years of his life, or of the course of severe study by which he prepared himself to be what he became, little is known beyond the circle of his private friends; but never surely was there

exhibited upon the great theatre of public business, a more profound erudition, greater power of discrimination, nor a more stern and invincible rectitude, combined with a degree of personal dignity, that commanded more than respect, even from his equals. If any one indeed were to be selected from many great features as peculiarly distinguishing his character, we should certainly be apt to fix upon that innate love of justice, and abhorrence of iniquity, without which, as he himself emphatically declared, when he took the chair of the court, all other qualities avail nothing, or rather they are worse than nothing, a sentiment that seemed to govern the whole course of his public duty. In the multiplicity of transactions, to which the extended commerce of the country gives rise, cases must occur to illustrate the darker side of the human character. Such questions seemed to call forth all his energy, and they who heard the great principles of integrity vindicated and enforced, in a strain of indignant eloquence, could scarce resist the impression that they beheld, for a moment, the earthly delegate of Eternal Justice. During the short period for which his lordship filled the chair of the court, it seemed to be his object to settle the law of Scotland upon great and permanent foundations. Far from seeking to escape from the decision of points of law, under an affected delicacy, which he well knew might be a cloak for ignorance, he anxiously dwelt upon such questions; and pointed them out for discussion that, by means of a deliberate judgment, he might fix a certain rule for the guidance of future times. With all his knowledge of law, his opinions upon these subjects were formed with singular caution, and what was at first thrown out merely as a doubt, was found, upon examination, to be the result of profound research, matured by the deepest reflection." In 'Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk,' President Blair is thus referred to: "It would appear as if the whole of his clear and commanding intellect had been framed and tempered in such a way as to qualify him peculiarly and expressly for being, what the Stagyrите has finely called 'a living equity'—one of the happiest, and perhaps one of the rarest, of all the combinations of mental

powers. By all men of all parties the merits of this great man also were alike acknowledged, and his memory is at this moment alike held in reverence by them all. Even the keenest of his political opponents (the late Lord Eldin)—himself one of the greatest lawyers that Scotland ever has produced—is said to have contemplated the superior intellect of Blair with a feeling of respectfulness not much akin to the common cast of his disposition. After hearing the President overturn, without an effort, in the course of a few clear and short sentences, a whole mass of ingenious sophistry, which it had cost himself much labour to erect, and which appeared to be regarded as insurmountable by all the rest of his audience, this great barrister is said to have sat for a few seconds, ruminating with much bitterness on the discomfiture of his cause, and then to have muttered between his teeth—‘My man ! God Almighty spared nae pains when he made your brains !’ Those that have seen Mr. Clerk, and know his peculiarities, appreciate the value of this compliment, and do not think the less of it because of its coarseness.”

President Blair was an accomplished scholar, and retained, at an advanced age, a keen relish and fresh remembrance of the beauties of Greek and Roman literature. As a pleader he was noted for a command of sarcastic wit and raillery ; but he never left the case to seek for opportunities to indulge in this vein, and his wit was always to the point. He was above the middle size, and of an erect and portly aspect. His countenance was a very fine one, expressive of dignified composure ; his eye in particular was full and penetrating ; and on occasions which engaged his feelings, it had a slow turn of emotion that was peculiarly noble. As a judge he possessed all the high qualifications for discharging to the best advantage the duties of President of the Supreme Court of Justice ;—a profound and comprehensive knowledge of the law, the purest honour and integrity, abilities of the highest class, a sound and sagacious judgment, unwearied patience and assiduity, candour and impartiality that were proof against every trial, propriety and elevation of feeling

on all subjects, a frank and liberal and independent turn of mind, and a generous contempt of everything low or disingenuous; these high endowments being graced and seasoned by an earnest and vivid elocution, and by a natural dignity of manner and animated majesty of countenance, which struck the evildoer with awe, and gave assurance of the native worth and energy of the spirit that reigned within. A statue of Lord President Blair, by Chantry, formerly in the first division of the court of session, has been removed to the outer house. He married Isabella, youngest daughter of Colonel Halkett of Lawhill, Fifeshire, by whom he had one son and three daughters. His eldest daughter became the wife of Alexander Maconochie of Meadowbank, appointed one of the lords of session and justiciary in 1819, resigned in 1843. About twenty years previous to his death, the Lord President purchased the small estate of Avontoun near Linlithgow, which continued always to be his favourite residence, and as he took great pleasure in agricultural improvements, he brought it to the highest state of cultivation.

✓ BLAIR, JOHN, LL.D., an eminent chronologist, and descendant of the Rev. Robert Blair of St. Andrews, falls to be noticed in connection with his eminent relatives whose lives have now been given. He was born at Edinburgh, where he was educated. He afterwards went to London, and was for some time usher of a school in Hedge Lane, having succeeded his friend and countryman, Mr. Andrew Henderson, author of a History of the Rebellion of 1745, in that situation. In 1754 he brought out a valuable and comprehensive work, entitled 'The Chronology and History of the World, from the Creation to the Year of Christ 1753, illustrated in fifty-six Tables,' and dedicated to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke. It was published by subscription, on account of the great expense of the plates. In his preface the author acknowledged his great obligations to the earl of Bath, and announced some chronological dissertations, in which he proposed to illustrate the disputed points, to explain the prevailing systems of chronology, and to establish the authorities upon which some of the particular eras depend. The

hint of this work was, as we have already shown in the life of his relative, Dr. Hugh Blair, taken from the latter's ingenious scheme of chronological tables. At this time he seems to have taken orders in the Church of England. In January 1755, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society. In September 1757 he was appointed chaplain to the princess dowager of Wales, and mathematical tutor to the duke of York. In March 1761, on Dr. Townshend's promotion to the deanery of Norwich, Dr. Blair's services were rewarded with a prebendal stall at Westminster. Six days after, the vicarage of Hinkley happening to fall vacant, Dr. Blair was presented to it by the dean and chapter of Westminster. The same year he was chosen a fellow of the Antiquarian Society. In September 1763, he attended the duke of York in a tour to the continent, and returned with him to England in 1764. In 1768 he published an improved edition of his Chronological Tables, which he dedicated to the princess of Wales. To this edition were annexed fourteen maps; with a dissertation prefixed, on the Progress of Geography. In March 1771 he was transferred by presentation of the dean and chapter of Westminster to the vicarage of St. Bride's in the city of London, and again in April 1776, to the rectory of St. John the Evangelist, Westminster. He was also rector of Horton in Buckinghamshire. He died of influenza June 24, 1782. While suffering under this malady, he received intelligence of the death of his brother, Captain Blair, in the preceding April, and the shock is supposed to have hastened his own. This able officer, for his gallant conduct in the Dolphin frigate in the engagement with the Dutch on the Dogger Bank, August 5, 1781, was promoted to the command of the Anson, a new ship of sixty-four guns. He distinguished himself under Sir George Rodney, in the memorable sea-fight with Count de Grasse, April 12, 1782, and in this action fell gloriously in the service of his country. He was one of the three to whom parliament on this occasion voted a monument. With this brief notice of Capt. Blair we close the series of the descendants of the worthy presbyterian divine. Dr. Blair's 'Lectures on the Canons of the Old Testament' were published after his death.—*Chalmers' Biog. Dict.*

His works are :

The Chronology and History of the World, from the Creation to the Year of Christ, 1753. Illustrated in 56 Tables ; of which four are Introductory and contain the Centuries prior to the First Olympiad ; and each of the remaining fifty-two contain, in one expanded view, fifty years, or half a century. Lond. 1756, fol. The same continued to 1761, and enlarged and improved. Lond. 1768, fol. Continued also to the year 1814. Illustrated in 69 Tables.

Fourteen Maps of Ancient and Modern Geography, for the Illustration of the Tables of Chronology and History. To which is prefixed, A Dissertation on the Rise and Progress of Geography. Lond. 1768, large fol.

The History of the Rise and Progress of Geography. Lond. 1784, 12mo.

Lectures on the Canons of the Old Testament, comprehending a Dissertation on the Septuagint Version. Lond. 1785, 4to,

Agitation of the Waters near Reading. Phil. Trans. Abr. x. 651, 1755.

BLAIR, JAMES, an eminent episcopalian divine, the projector of the university of Williamsburg, in Virginia, was born and educated in Scotland, but the date of his birth is not mentioned. Having entered into holy orders some time in the reign of Charles the Second, he was duly appointed to a benefice in his native country ; but becoming discouraged in consequence of the dislike manifested by the Scottish people to the establishment of episcopacy, he resigned his living and removed to England. Being introduced to Dr. Compton, then bishop of London, that prelate prevailed upon him, in 1685, to go out to Virginia as a missionary, and by his conduct and ministerial labours he was eminently serviceable in promoting the cause of religion in that colony. In 1689, he was appointed by the same prelate his commissary for the province, the highest office in the church there. Finding that the want of proper seminaries for the advancement of religion and learning proved a great obstacle to all attempts for the propagation of the gospel, he formed a design of erecting and endowing a college at Williamsburg, then the capital of Virginia, for professors and students in academical learning. With this view he raised a considera-

ble sum of money by voluntary subscription ; and in order the more effectually to accomplish his object, he sailed for England in 1693. The design met the approval of King William and Queen Mary ; and a patent was passed for erecting and endowing a college by the name of 'the college of William and Mary ;' the establishment of which was aided by an endowment from the king of two thousand pounds, and twenty thousand acres of land from the royal domain, together with a tax of a penny a pound on tobacco exported from Virginia and Maryland to other plantations, as the American colonies, now forming the United States, were then called. Of the new college Mr. Blair was appointed president, and enjoyed that office nearly fifty years. He was also rector of Williamsburg and president of the council in that colony. He wrote 'Our Saviour's Divine Sermon on the Mount explained, and the practice of it recommended, in divers sermons and discourses,' which was published with a recommendatory preface by the Rev. Dr. Waterland, in four volumes octavo, London, in 1742. Mr. Blair died in 1743.—*Burnet's History of His Own Times*, vol. iii, page 165, octavo edition.

BLAIR, PATRICK, an eminent physician and botanist, was born, it is supposed, in Dundee, where he practiced physic and surgery. In the year 1706, having dissected an elephant belonging to an exhibition, which had died in that town, he wrote an account of its anatomy and osteology, which was published in 1710 in the *Philosophical Transactions*, Numbers 326 and 327. This first made him known as an anatomist. In a subsequent number of the *Transactions* he gave a description of the ossicula auditus, accompanied with engravings. His account of this dissection was also published separately in 1711, 4to, with figures. It contains an accurate description of the proboscis and its muscles, and confirms, according to Haller, the opinion formerly given that the elephant has no gall-bladder. In 1715, when the rebellion broke out in Scotland, Dr. Blair, being of well-known Jacobite principles, was for a short time imprisoned on suspicion. He afterwards removed to London, and

acquired considerable reputation by some discourses on the sexes of flowers, which he read before the Royal Society. He also republished his 'Anatomy of the Elephant.' In 1718 he brought out a volume of *Miscellaneous Observations on the Practice of Physic, Anatomy, Surgery and Botany,* in 8vo. In 1720 he produced the work by which he rendered the greatest service to botany, being '*Botanical Essays,*' 8vo, in two parts, with illustrations; containing the '*Discourses on the Sexes of Plants,*' which he had read before the Royal Society, much enlarged, and published at the request of several of its members. It is divided into five essays. The three first treat of what is peculiar to plants, and the two last on what is common to them and animals. He confirms the arguments in favour of the sexes of plants by sound reasoning and several additional experiments. Some of his notions are now abandoned by botanists; but his work contains information which, even at this advanced period of the science, is considered useful and correct. Having removed to Boston, in Lincolnshire, where Dr. Pulteney conjectures he practiced as a physician during the remainder of his life. He published a work entitled '*Pharmaco-Botanologia, or an Alphabetical and Classical Dissertation on all the British Indigenous and Garden Plants of the New Dispensatory,*' London, 1723-1728. This work, in which he introduced several of the rarer plants discovered by himself in the vicinity of Boston, came out in decades, and extends only to the letter H. He wrote various papers for the *Philosophical Transactions*; particularly a '*Method of Discovering the Virtues of Plants by their External Structure,*' and '*Observations on the Generation of Plants.*' The time of his death is not known, but it is supposed to have taken place soon after 1728.—*Pulteney's Sketches.*

BLAIR, SIR JAMES HUNTER, Bart, an eminent banker, descended paternally from the Hunters of Hunterston, in Ayrshire, the second son of Mr. John Hunter, of Brownhill, merchant in Ayr, was born there February 21, 1741. In 1756 he was placed as an apprentice in the banking-house of Messrs. Coutts, Edinburgh, where Sir William Forbes was

also a clerk. In 1763, on the death of Mr. John Coutts, he and Sir William were admitted to a share of the business, and ultimately became the principal partners. In December, 1770, he married Jane, eldest daughter of John Blair of Dunskey, in Wigtonshire, in right of whom he acquired, in 1777, the family estate, when he assumed the name of Blair in addition to his own. The improvements which he introduced on the estate of Dunskey were of the most extensive and judicious kind. The writer of his memoir in the *Edinburgh Mag.* for 1794, says, "He nearly rebuilt the town of Portpatrick; he repaired and greatly improved the harbour; established packet boats of a larger size on the much frequented passage to Donaghadee, in Ireland; and, lastly, while the farmers in that part of Scotland were not very well acquainted with the most approved modes of farming, he set before them a successful example of the best modes of agriculture, the greatest service, perhaps, which can be performed by a private man to his country." In September, 1781, he was chosen M.P. for the city of Edinburgh, and at the general election in 1784 was re-elected; but he soon resigned his seat in favour of Sir Adam Fergusson, Baronet. At Michaelmas, 1784, he was elected lord provost of Edinburgh; and to him that city is indebted for many improvements, particularly the rebuilding of the college, and the plan and erection of the South Bridge, the foundation-stone of which was laid August 1, 1785. He was created a baronet in 1786, and died at Harrowgate, July 1, 1787, in the forty-seventh year of his age. He is buried in the Greyfriars' churchyard, Edinburgh. Hunter Square and Blair Street, Edinburgh, are called after Sir James, and a portrait of him in his robes as lord provost of that city, is given in Kay's *Edinburgh Portraits*. He had fourteen children, twelve of whom survived their infancy. His eldest son, Sir John, died in 1800 unmarried, when his next brother, Sir David, succeeded to the title and estate of Blairquhan, in Ayrshire. The third son, James, lieutenant-colonel of the Ayrshire militia, inherited the estates of Dunskey and Robertland. He was for a considerable time M.P. for Wigtonshire, and died in 1822,

when his next surviving brother, Forbes, succeeded to his estates. The latter became a candidate, on the conservative interest, for the representation in parliament, of Edinburgh, in the first election after the passing of the Reform bill, and died soon after in 1833. His younger brother, Thomas, an officer in the army, then became proprietor of Dunskey. This gentleman was wounded at the battle of Talavera, where he was made prisoner, and detained in France till the peace in 1814. He was a second time wounded at the battle of Waterloo in 1815, and promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He subsequently served as brigadier-general in the Burmese war. Two views of old Dunskey castle are given in the second volume of Grose's antiquities of Scotland, accompanied with a brief description.

